

PREPARING THE INDIVIDUAL TO MAKE A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE



TREETOPS

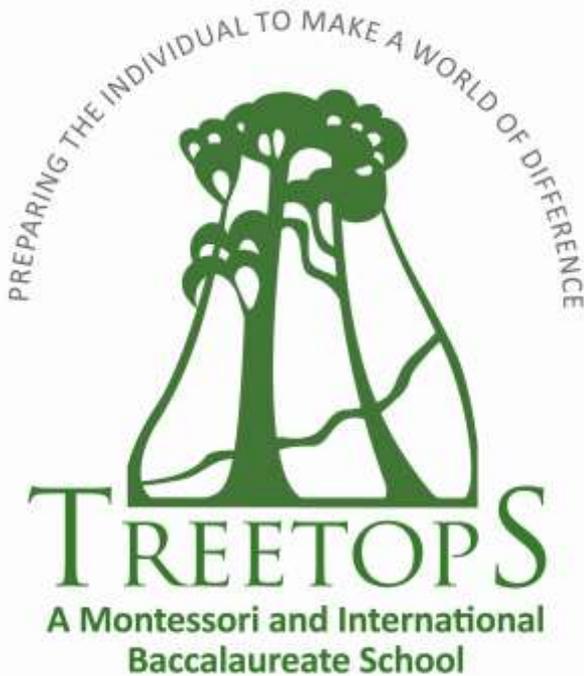
A Montessori and International  
Baccalaureate School



PROSPECTUS

*Preparing the individual to make a world of difference*

# Welcome to Treetops School



## VISION

Preparing the individual to make a world of difference.

## MISSION

Treetops provides a dynamic inquiry-based education that empowers the individual to reach their unique potential within a natural and respectful setting.

## CORE VALUES

- Education is the shared responsibility of students, family and school.
- Students are presented with a challenging and broad academic environment that encourages intellectual inquiry and critical-thinking.
- Nurturing curiosity and creativity is the key to stimulating exploration and discovery throughout life.
- Students learn best when they are actively engaged in authentic learning experiences.

We are situated in Darlington, in the hills east of Perth. Formed in 1989, Treetops is a close-knit community of parents, staff and students, which strives to assist students to develop to their full potential, to be happy and peaceful, to grow in knowledge and confidence, and to have respect for themselves and others. Treetops' nurturing environment provides students with a broad, harmonious and thorough education from playgroup to secondary school.

The Montessori Method has longevity world-wide and is proving to work hand in hand with the International Baccalaureate Programmes.

Treetops has always had an excellent reputation for an outstanding Early Years programme with our long standing Children's House programme and lower primary classes.

Treetops works to craft unique academic pathways for our Secondary students, tailored to their strengths and goals, assisting them into optimal post-school occupational or academic pathways. Our International Baccalaureate Diploma and Career-related Programmes provide students with the breadth and depth expected of world-class curriculums and build upon the capacities enabled by Montessori learning approaches. These approaches place a high value upon curiosity, independence and problem solving, communication, respect, empathy and service.

With Treetops' smaller than average class sizes, our multi trained, long standing teaching staff and our incredible community, our multi-faceted approach to education from Playgroup through to Year 12 is something really outstanding.



# Our Approach to Education

Montessori education is the result of the life and work of Dr Maria Montessori (1870-1952), an Italian doctor who devoted her life to children and their education.

It is a holistic and child-centred approach to education which takes into account all aspects of a child's developmental needs - physical, emotional, social and spiritual. The Montessori approach focuses on the whole personality of the child; the faculties of intellect, deliberation, initiative and independent thinking. Montessori education emphasises the uniqueness of the individual child and acknowledges that children grow and develop at different rates.

Montessori teaching materials, many of which are self-correcting, are used throughout our Children's House and lower Primary areas. By using these materials, students learn not just how to get something right, but why things work the way they do. At each stage in the student's development appropriate equipment and activities are provided to assist the student in their learning.

The Montessori Australia Foundation (MAF) developed a curriculum which has been approved by both the Australian and Western Australian education authorities. Treetops uses this Montessori curriculum in Children's House. Throughout the Primary years however, it is blended with the WA curriculum throughout the primary years to ensure that students receive an education that is both true to Montessori and compliant with contemporary thinking in terms of the State and National curriculum standards.

In Secondary, our instruction is in line with the secondary SCSA curriculum. However, the Montessori philosophies are still applied and are an excellent fit to the philosophy which underpins the International Baccalaureate Organisation's Diploma Programme (IBDP) and Career-related Programme (IBCP) which run in Years 11 and 12.

During 2018, our teaching staff spent time considering what a Treetops' graduate looks like and why Treetops is both a Montessori and an International Baccalaureate school.

Montessori is an approach supporting the full development of the human being, and is used in over 22,000 schools worldwide, and has a longer track record of success than any other educational approach in the world.

The Montessori approach to education inspires children towards a lifelong love of learning, utilising their natural developmental trajectory. Children become confident, responsible, independent learners, who trust in their own abilities. The inclusivity and positive social development facilitated by the

Montessori programme forms the basis for a persistent attachment to learning and knowledge.

Each teacher partners with parents and their children in learning journeys, an experience beginning in Children's House and culminating in Year 12 graduation. To define the attributes that we desire in our graduates, is to also explore what we value as a school.

Montessori Principles provide a framework for our school culture. The Montessori Principles are:

- Innate goodness of children;
- Natural urge to explore the world and to learn;
- Each child is unique;
- Children grow and develop at different rates;
- Focus on the whole child, physical, emotional, social, intellectual and spiritual;
- Each stage of a child's education should meet all those needs;
- Education should focus on the whole personality of the child; the faculties of intellect, deliberation, initiative and independent thinking.

Montessori Qualities and the IB Learner Profile are complementary, and provide context for learning.

Montessori Qualities	IB Learner Profile
Curiosity	Inquiry
Engaging with Ideas	Knowledgeability
Independence and Problem Solving	Thinking
Communication	Communication
Respect	Principled Behaviour
Appreciation of Difference	Open Mindedness
Empathy and Service	Caring
Willingness and Courage	Risk Taking
Whole-child Development	Balance
Thoughtfulness	Reflection

Fundamentally, we are a school that greatly values child-centred learning approaches, with a strong focus upon the individual. Montessori Learning Principles and Qualities, along with the IB Learner Profile, are ideal vehicles to support our goals.

Treetops' Graduates:

*Are life-long learners with highly developed critical thinking skills, cognisant of their strengths and weaknesses, who use that awareness to identify areas of growth to reach their full potential.*

*Model respectful, pro-social and principled behaviour to all individuals as they value everyone's unique contribution to local and globally-diverse communities and their environments.*

# Sugar Gums Playgroup

18 MONTHS – THREE YEARS

From the moment of birth, the individual is bombarded by a myriad of sense perceptions. Maria Montessori described this period of human development as the stage of the *Unconscious Absorbent Mind*. Through their senses, children discover their immediate world. In Sugar Gums Playgroup, children are given the freedom to explore by touching, tasting, smelling, seeing and hearing. Parents who attend Sugar Gums Playgroup with their children one morning a week learn that two of their most important responsibilities are to help the child towards independence and to set limits for them.

## Education from Birth

The period between birth and six years is when children learn instinctively from their environment. This is an unconscious process. Maria Montessori believed that the first stages of a child's life are the most important because this is when attitudes and patterns for learning are formed that will last for life.



## Environment

Sugar Gums Playgroup provides an environment which is suited to the younger child, aged from eighteen months to three years. Children are free to manipulate this environment and experience age-appropriate activities under the gentle guidance of a trained Montessori leader. Sugar Gums Playgroup is a safe, fun, caring and stimulating environment where children spend quality time with their parents.

## A Typical Morning in Playgroup

Parents and children arrive at Playgroup by 9.30am. When everyone has arrived and placed their piece of fruit in the fruit bowl, the children are settled and sing a few songs as a group. There is then a small discussion based on the theme of the term; 'transport' for example. This is followed by an organised activity such as painting a mural or making their own car from cardboard boxes. Morning tea follows and the children enjoy cleaning their plates and cups almost as much as the fruit and snacks. After morning tea there is free play, where children choose an activity themselves. Next, the Playgroup Leader reads a story and then the children sing more songs, including the goodbye song.

## Playgroup Leader

Playgroup sessions are run by leaders who have experience in a Montessori environment. The Playgroup Leader plans and organises the activities and provides guidance for the parents to work effectively with their child to aid their development. Playgroup sessions are held during term time on scheduled mornings from 9.30am – 11.30am. You may wish to attend two playgroup sessions per week and this is dependent on availability.

## Eligibility

Children are eligible to attend Playgroup from the age of 18 months. At three and a half years, if ready, children enrol in our Children's House programme.



# Children's House

PRE KINDERGARTEN – PRE PRIMARY

A Montessori Children's House is made up of children from ages three to six. This mixed age grouping of children corresponds to Maria Montessori's theory of child development, which is based on three-year cycles. In this multi-age setting, the children learn from each other, and they learn because of each other. Younger children have the opportunity to look ahead and see what is coming next by observing the older children. Older children have the opportunity to reinforce their knowledge by sharing it with the younger children. This unique cycle of learning is designed to take advantage of the child's sensitive years between three to six, when the child can absorb information from an enriched environment.

Maria Montessori described this period of human development as the stage of the *Conscious Absorbent Mind*. At this point in time, the child's senses are more acute than they are at any other period in their life. While still absorbing impressions, the child is now becoming more active in the exploration of the environment and is attempting to perfect and refine certain skills. In this process the child is attempting to discover the order upon which the world around them is built.



We believe that the best educational programmes do more than just teach children how to count and recite the alphabet. In Children's House, we aim to reach the children's hearts as well as their minds. Self-esteem and effective relationships are important goals for our programme. While encouraging independence, Montessori education also develops a respect and caring for self, others, and the environment. We guide children to reach their full potential.

We also want the children to be literate, numerate, learn about the world, problem-solve, think creatively, learn 'how to learn', and to instil in them a love of learning. We achieve this through the orderly, prepared environment created especially for the Montessori child.

In the Montessori Children's House, the children are provided with experiences in practical living; for example, cooking and cleaning (there is a kitchen area in which everything is scaled down to a size easily used by children). These real-life tasks provide a link between what happens at school and at home. There are many activities that improve the child's confidence, dexterity, and ability – walking, carrying, pouring, speaking, and particularly using the hands. We believe in order to best learn, there must be concentration. The most powerful link between a child and their focus is by fixing their attention to a task performed with their hands.

The child works with freedom of choice, without competition or coercion and always at their own pace, with each stone in the 'building' of education being well and truly laid before another is added. The Montessori materials have this dual-range purpose in addition to their immediate purpose of giving specific information to a child.

Our Montessori Children's House also introduces children to a wide range of sensorial materials with which they explore the world; sound cylinders for shaking and matching, sandpaper tablets giving the experiences of rough, rougher, roughest, a tower of cubes to demonstrate volume. These, and other, materials help the child to develop a sound base for language and mathematic learning.

This "learning by experience" teaches children to work independently and helps to develop a high degree of self-discipline as well as an enthusiasm for learning. To the child, the Children's House is a world of independent discovery.

### **Is my child ready?**

A Montessori Children's House places less focus on academic readiness and more on the child's ability to communicate, cooperate, and their willingness to accept and master new experiences. Whether a child can count, identify colours, or use scissors properly are less important to us than the readiness of the whole child – we can teach them all the skills they need once they are in Children's House.

As parents, you may sense that the time may be right for your child to come to school. Perhaps it's because they have exhausted their toys, or your child has experienced positive experiences away from you. You feel that your child is ready for new experiences, challenges and friends. This is when you know your child is ready to benefit and grow in the Montessori classroom.

### **Children's House Sessions**

Children's House is ideally a three-year programme with children generally starting at the age of three. Typically, a child at three will attend five morning sessions (8.45am-12pm). Children will commence to stay for full day sessions when the teacher and parent perceive the child is ready. This is often around the child's fourth birthday. It is a legal requirement that all Pre-Primary children attend full day sessions.

Specialist subjects such as Music, Physical Education, and Japanese are offered to full-time students in Children's House.



# Primary School

YEAR 1 – YEAR 6



Maria Montessori termed the second plane of development the *Intellectual Period*. This is the time when the child has a huge appetite for knowledge. According to Maria Montessori, the child is now on the threshold of reasoning - "Now they will occupy themselves with the how and why. They are beginning to become aware of the problems of cause and effect." Children are also developing a moral sense.

Our Wattle (Year 1 & 2) and Marri (Year 3 & 4) classrooms provide children with a wide range of Montessori and other materials to help them explore and learn. The equipment is on shelves within easy reach of the children. Once the child has been introduced to a particular piece of equipment by the teacher and shown its purpose, the child is free to take it from the shelf and use it. Social and personal development continues to be nurtured in Wattle and Marri. Children in this age-range often work in groups, enhancing leadership skills and social responsibility.

In these classes, their interactions are with children whose age and abilities are varied and we believe that this helps our students gain an appreciation for their achievements and the accomplishments of others, while being challenged by the achievements of their fellow students.

By the time children reach the age of nine they enter the second plane of development where they begin to move away from the use of equipment towards a more abstract exploration of the world. Children are encouraged to make connections between subject areas. Computers, iPads and other technologies are increasingly used as learning tools.

In Karri (Year 5 & 6) the academic curriculum is supported by activities and routines which promote independence and an understanding of their place in the world and their responsibility for it. There is a strong focus at this stage on their development as social beings.

In our Karri classroom, children spend a lot of time carrying out research projects structured around the inquiry process. These can be completed individually or by working in close collaboration with peers, focusing on organising and sharing responsibility.

Specialist subjects such as Music, Visual Art, Physical Education and Japanese are offered throughout all of Primary School.

# Secondary School

YEAR 7 – YEAR 10

The Secondary School builds on the foundations which have been laid down in the earlier years. Adolescents are thinking and working more like adults. It is an exciting and challenging period of physical, intellectual and social growth for our young adults, and our academic programme is delivered to support this growth.

The Secondary School programme is designed to offer an all-round foundation for students to pursue an academic and rigorous curriculum when they reach the IB Diploma or IB Career-Related Programme in Years 11 and 12. Students are well prepared by the education they received in their Montessori Primary years to be motivated, self-regulating and self-directed learners. Treetops strives to provide an environment where students feel secure, recognised and also offers them challenges and opportunities to try new paths and discover where they may want to go as they become adults.

The WA Curriculum is used in the Secondary School and we endeavour to keep the Montessori spirit alive in the teaching. This programme is tailored to students who enjoy learning and have a deep interest in the world around them. The school offers a fully-equipped Science laboratory and commercial kitchen. Literacy and Numeracy is supported and balanced by specialist Visual Arts, Physical Education, a fully integrated Music programme, and Japanese as a second language.

Secondary students are an important part of our school community and essential members of the student body. They are expected to be full participants in all aspects of student and community life – the school encourages that the students partake in many of the community service opportunities available to the school during the year.

Year 10 students consolidate previous learning and further develop their skills in independent, critical thinking. Students attend work experience sessions and are encouraged to know themselves and to find their unique place within the world. Aside from their academic studies, Secondary students are important role models for the younger children at Treetops.



# International Baccalaureate

## YEAR 11 & YEAR 12

Treetops offers students two course options in Year 11 and 12: the IB Diploma Programme (DP) and the IB Career-related Programme (CP). The CP complements the existing Diploma Programme which has been offered at Treetops since 2007.

Treetops is well known for its nurturing environment which supports the intellectual, social, physical, and emotional development of each of its students. The IB Programmes therefore bring to Treetops exciting links with the international community.

The IB Learner Profile is not just a list; it is part of Treetops' vision. The community at Treetops (students, teachers, staff and parents) aspire to be good representatives of the Learner Profile. It offers a values system that transcends the learning in the classroom and is the cornerstone of every facet of the school.

### **IB Diploma Programme**

Treetops has chosen the IB Diploma as our university entrance programme because of its student-centred, holistic and international approach to education. The IBO philosophy is closely aligned with that of the Montessori movement in general and Treetops in particular. The overall aim of the IBDP is to develop internationally minded people who, by recognising their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world. The IBDP is, of course, more than just a university entrance qualification; it is a preparation for life and many successful IBDP students go on to something other than study at university.

Pamoja Education is the UK-based provider of online International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme courses. Students taking a Pamoja course work with a teacher and with other classmates in a global, virtual setting modelled on the idea of a “flipped” classroom whereby students may complete some of their classwork during out-of-school hours, and complete their individual work in a supported environment during school hours. At Treetops, we use Pamoja courses to increase the number of Humanities subjects we offer our Year 11 and 12 students. Examples of Pamoja online courses include Psychology, Economics, Business & Management, and Information Technology in a Global Society. For more information about Pamoja, please visit [www.pamojaeducation.com](http://www.pamojaeducation.com)

### **IB Career-related Programme**

The Career-related Programme (CP) commenced at Treetops in 2019 and incorporates the vision and educational principles of the IB into a unique programme, specifically developed for students who wish to engage in career-related learning. The CP's flexible educational framework allows schools to meet the needs, backgrounds and contexts of students. This flexibility means that Treetops can continue to offer individualised programmes in partnership with career training and work placement providers, while still offering an internationally recognised qualification and several post-school pathways.

CP students engage with a rigorous study programme that genuinely interests them while gaining transferable and lifelong skills. The study programme over two years includes the completion of 2 or 3 Diploma subjects, a career-related study through an external provider such as TAFE, and four core subjects unique to the CP: Language Development, Personal & Professional Skills, Service Learning and a Reflective Project.

The mix of career-focused learning and DP subjects mean that students do not have to forego academic subjects in order to pursue vocational options. Post-school pathways for CP students include employment and further training and education. It also includes university entrance to some courses via a portfolio.



# Family Involvement at Treetops

Treetops firmly believes that a partnership should exist between the school and family. At Treetops, we treat all children with respect and promote a high level of independence within each child. We encourage families to promote these values in the home environment. We recognise that the parent/guardian is the most important person in the child's life and we aim to create a partnership in which parents are involved in their child's education. In the Primary years, parents are invited to assist with a variety of activities within the classroom, for example, cooking and craft.

Written reports are provided twice a year and each child's progress is discussed with parents each semester at parent/teacher interviews. In addition, parents are actively encouraged to speak with staff regarding how the classrooms operate. Parent Information Evenings are also offered throughout the year, and at the end of Term 1, each class holds a Parent Day to invite parents into the classroom for the morning or afternoon.

At the end of Terms 2 and 3, we hold a Shuukai (Japanese word for 'gathering') where each class presents to parents and their peers a representation of the term's learning, such as a song or play. At the end of each year we hold a Family Gathering. This is a reflection and celebration of the learning that the children have achieved during the year, and includes the Year 12 Graduation. It is an opportunity to celebrate our unique community and also provides an opportunity for families and staff to socialise.

Our Parents and Friends Committee is a dedicated group of parents who take on a range of activities to support the running of the school. This can range from running a sausage sizzle on the night of a school function, making and selling 'Fruity Ice Creams' on Friday afternoons, assisting with our stall at the Darlington Arts Festival, or participating in other activities that arise throughout the year. Parents and Friends is not just about fundraising, it is a forum for sharing ideas and discussing issues that may be relevant to parents and the school. Everyone is welcome to join the P&F. However, parents can be involved in fundraising, events and occasions at the school without needing to join the P&F and on a project-by-project basis.

The school has a system of Parent Liaisons who welcome new parents, introduce them to existing parents and help them to settle in, directing any of their queries to the appropriate person to assist.



# The Enrolment Process

The goal of our admissions process is to ensure a good match between your family's values and aspirations for your children and those of our school. We work closely with parents as an extension of the home.

Should you wish to know more about the Montessori Method, the International Baccalaureate Programmes, or how our school operates, you are invited to make an appointment with the Principal for a tour of the school. The tour will cover all classes from the youngest children in our Children's House, to the International Baccalaureate Programmes in Years 11 and 12. The tour will take about 45 minutes and there is an opportunity afterwards to ask questions. Tours work best if you are able to come together as a family, including parents, guardians and children.

After you have had a tour, we can provide you with an Application for Enrolment form. This will need to be returned to us with the Application Fee and requested documents to place your child's name on our Waiting List. In addition, we ask that you enclose a letter telling us about your child and your family. This will help us in preparation for enrolment, as well as introducing the teacher to your child.

Please note that we cannot process your application without the following:

- Application Fee
- A copy of your child's Birth Certificate
- Your child's Immunisation Statement from the AIR that is less than 2 months old
- A copy of your child's visa/citizenship documentation if not born in Australia

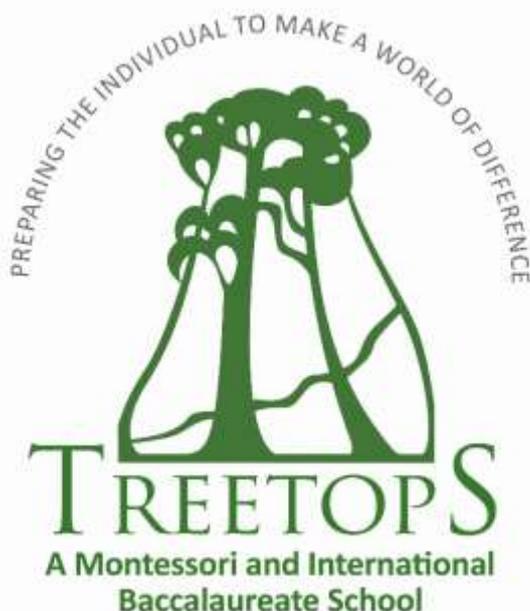
All forms must be filled out in their entirety, including all documents requested, or enrolment may be deferred.

Once an application has been received, and if a place becomes available, a letter of offer will be sent to you. If a student is enrolling into our Year 11 class, this process will also include discussion with our IB Coordinator.

If the enrolling student is younger than 3 years of age and applying for a place in the Children's House in upcoming years, the process will be the same. Children this age may be invited to attend a part-morning orientation in Children's House as part of the enrolment process.

Please bear in mind that we typically have very limited places available during the school year. Our major intake of children is for the start of each school year. We do offer intake throughout the year for students entering the Children's House, should there be a place available, and we may consider applications for other year levels on a case by case basis. You are welcome to apply for a place at any point during the school year and if there are no vacancies, your child's application will simply be held until the next intake.

The school has an Enrolment Policy which is available for parents to read on the school's website. For further information, please contact the school office between the hours of 8:30am and 3:30pm, Monday to Friday or email [office@treetops.wa.edu.au](mailto:office@treetops.wa.edu.au).



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